

[Davidson Water breaks ground for new water plant](#) (Lexington Dispatch – June 9, 2011)

By Vikki Broughton Hodges

A groundbreaking ceremony took place Wednesday for Davidson Water's new water treatment plant, which is the second phase of a long-term expansion and improvement project aimed at securing the member-owned water supply cooperative's ability to meet future demand, improve water quality and comply with environmental regulations. Davidson Water management and directors, project engineers and contractors, U.S. Reps. Howard Coble, R-Sixth, and **Mel Watt**, D-12th, Davidson County Commissioners Chairman Sam Watford as well as USDA Rural Development State Director Randy Gore donned hard hats and dug shovels in at the construction site on Koontz Road at the Yadkin River. A \$20 million, 40-year low-interest loan from USDA Rural Development made the second phase of the project possible, noted Gregg Stabler, general manager of Davidson Water. The project's second phase, expected to be completed in May 2013, will give the water treatment plant the ability to increase the current capacity of 20 million gallons a day (mgd) to 30 mgd and the ability to expand to 40 mgd and more. It also includes a 5 million gallon clear well, enhanced settling basins, high-service pumps and 30 granular-activated carbon contactors, which can remove organic compounds and carcinogens in water, which meets stricter Environmental Protection Agency standards. "USDA Rural Development is proud of its role to help rural communities and its citizens gain access to safe, reliable drinking water and in helping to improve the environmental quality in rural areas," Gore said in his remarks. "This type of project helps to rebuild and revitalize the nation's infrastructure while creating and retaining jobs." Gore, who noted Davidson Water's system is the largest USDA Rural Development-funded water system in the U.S., said he was happy to announce that North Carolina was the largest recipient of such loan funds last year, garnering \$2.2 billion, bolstered by federal stimulus money. Stabler said the first phase of the project is nearly complete — a new river intake that is 5 to 7 feet deeper in the river than the current intakes, river pumps capable of pumping 40 million gallons daily expandable to 60 mgd, a new raw water intake capable of pumping 40 mgd and expandable to 50 mgd and a new 100-million-gallon reservoir "we hope to be filling later this month." Noting the Yadkin River's flow is down now due to dry conditions, Stabler noted the deeper river intakes and increased reservoir capacity could come in handy sooner rather than later. Stabler also recounted some of the cooperative's history at the ceremony Wednesday. A group of northern Davidson County community leaders got the ball rolling by obtaining a low-interest Farmers Home Administration loan of \$3.68 million in 1968 to build the water system. When it began operations in 1969, the water plant handled 2 million gallons of water a day for about 3,000 customers. "\$3,680,000 went a long way 43 years ago," he said to laughter from the audience. Today, Davidson Water processes 20 million gallons of water daily for 58,800 customers in seven cities and five counties. Most customers are in Davidson County, but Stabler said the system also serves a large section of northwest Randolph County, the edges of Forsyth County, "a road or two in

Guilford County and when we provide water to Handy Sanitary District some of our water goes into Montgomery County.” The system serves all of Midway, Wallburg and Trinity and small parts of Lexington, Thomasville, Archdale and High Point. Stabler said the estimated cost of the entire expansion and improvement project, phases one and two, is \$38.86 million. “Just add a zero to the project we had 43 years ago,” he said. “But we still believe at this cost our users will have a more dependable source, newer technology to provide even better water and additional capacity for future generations allowing for agricultural, commercial and industrial growth.”